

Shelton State Community College
THE KAREN PHIFER BROOKS AND SUSAN PHIFER CORK LIBRARY
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Shelton State Community College provides library services on the Dr. Harold C. and Evelyn Martin Campus and on the C.A. Fredd Campus to serve all students, regardless of the programs in which they are enrolled. The library is named for two members of the J. Reese Phifer family, which has been supportive of the college in a number of ways for many years.

The main library houses approximately 40,000 books and carries more than 350 current periodical subscriptions. Its holdings provide support for both academic and technical areas of study. The Fredd Campus Branch Library houses approximately 1,000 books to support programs housed on that campus. In addition, the Fredd Campus Library provides a small, basic reference collection. A small special collection, the Lon Alexander, Sr. Employee Publications Collection, is housed in the main campus library.

Shelton State's library went online in the fall of 1994, using a Dynix library system. The system currently includes circulation, cataloging, reserves, dial access, and media modules. Shelby, the electronic library system, is a catalog to all holdings for both campuses. Library users may access Shelby in the libraries on each campus or through a home computer through dial access. These procedures are available on each campus. When the college's network is complete, employees will be able to access Shelby from workstations and office computers on both campuses.

Current information is available on both campuses in print and electronic formats. Current subscriptions as well as computer databases provide this information for students in a number of general and specific subject areas. Information and articles can be printed directly from the computers on which the databases are mounted. Periodical backfiles are available in print, bound, and microfilm formats, as noted in Shelby. Plans are underway for the development of a local area network (LAN) that will make all databases available through any library workstation.

Internet/WWW access is provided through workstations in the main library; the LAN under development will increase user access to the information superhighway at Shelton State. Internet/WWW access is limited on the Fredd Campus to the electronic classroom and Internet labs; extension of the campus network to the Fredd Campus library will include Internet/WWW access. Audiovisuals for individual and class use are provided on each campus as well. Viewing is possible for individual users as well as for small groups in each facility. Audiovisual holdings are listed in Shelby.

The new library facility was planned within the "information commons" concept. This concept, which is cutting edge facilities planning and design, reflects a renewed emphasis on undergraduate library service and what is called the "teaching library." The concept is best exemplified in the Leavey Undergraduate Library at the University of Southern California and has been used for planning new facilities at major institutions throughout the United States. A true "information commons" integrates computer resources, tutorial programs, and library services in one facility, making it easier for students to receive access to resources and assistance. The focus is learner-centered, with the student at the heart of planning and delivery of services.

While Shelton State's overall campus design does not fall within the "information

“commons” approach, the library was designed to centralize all electronic and technology-driven resources and services. Based on custom-designed tables that simplify wiring and include expansion potential, Shelton State’s “information commons” integrates traditional audiovisual equipment for individual use (e.g., videos, slides, etc.) with computerized resources. The tables also allow users to sit side-by-side, helping each other learn to use computerized resources and make appropriate selections of information.

The new library was designed to be user-friendly. The library faculty and staff offices are intentionally positioned so that offices open both to the central work area, shared by library employees, and to the information commons and circulation areas of the library. Along with glass-walled offices, this makes library personnel fully accessible to library users and encourages them to seek assistance whenever they need it. It is a less intimidating design than those where offices are behind closed doors, with personnel available only at designated workstations as specific times. At Shelton State, professional librarians are available on the main campus during every hour the library is open.

During the planning process, students were asked to make suggestions for library facilities. One of the most frequent requests was for group study rooms. The new library includes three small and one large group study area. These areas can be used by students who wish to study together or work on group projects without disturbing others in the library. Group study rooms foster collaborative learning and cooperative problem-solving, as do the customized tables in the Information Commons area.

The Periodicals Room is the smallest area, growth-wise, within the new library. This is an intentional design because current information sources are shifting from print to electronic formats. The areas of library collections that are anticipated to grow the least over time are periodicals backfiles and microfilm. Within the next few years, the collection is expected to shift from paper issues and microfilm backfiles to electronic and publishing-on-demand resources.

The wiring plan for the new library is one of its strongest features. The plan was designed to allow for change in the delivery of library services as well as increase in the use of laptop or notebook computers by library users. During construction, wiring was laid in conduits leading throughout the library--including offices, workrooms, the information commons, group study rooms, study tables, and individual study carrels. The newest study carrels have wiring systems that will allow library users to plug in computers to the college’s networks; all new furnishing will have this feature.

The Kiwanis Room, located near the rear of the library, is reserved as a special place for college employees to read, study, conduct research, or work on other projects. It was set aside specifically as a service for employees to encourage and facilitate their use of library resources. It is wired for connection to the college’s networks.

The Silent Study area, located in the rear of the library, is designated for students who wish to have quiet areas for individual study and research. While other library areas are designed to encourage group or cooperative activity (thus increasing the noise level), the “quiet please” policy is enforced in the Silent Study area. The designation emphasizes that the library collections and service areas, within space allocated to the library on the new campus, accommodates multiple library users with different needs. Special needs, such as visual impairment and mobility, are also addressed through library furnishings, equipment, and layout.

The combination of audiovisual services and reserves is a new feature for Shelton State.

Because resources from both collections circulate *inside* the library for individual users, this area centralizes check-out services. Because the majority of hourly activity is in the reserves area, the separation of reserves and general circulation creates an “express check-out” for books or materials that circulate *outside* the library as well as for activation of library cards. The Copy Center, which now houses two photocopiers, is located adjacent to the reserves area and the periodicals backfiles, serving the two collections from which library users are most likely to make photocopies. Copiers accept coins, bills, and copy cards, which may be purchased at the College Book Store.

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